

# ReflectAI: AI-Assisted Journaling to Support Emotional Awareness and Reflective Practice

## Author

Pujan Pokharel

Advisor: Dr. Tim Gorichanaz

Drexel University, College of Computing & Informatics

---

## Abstract

ReflectAI is a prototype journaling platform designed to integrate artificial intelligence into personal writing practices, with the goal of encouraging emotional awareness and reflective thinking. In collaboration with Drexel University, we conducted a 10–14-day longitudinal study with six participants. Participants journaled regularly using AI-generated prompts and completed pre- and post-surveys, alongside optional follow-up interviews.

Findings show that ReflectAI reduced blank-page anxiety, supported deeper reflection, and provided non-judgmental, therapist-like guidance. Quantitative results indicated a slight increase in participants' self-reported confidence in understanding emotions (average pre-survey score 3.67 vs. post-survey 3.83). Qualitative feedback emphasized usability strengths and highlighted opportunities for improvement, such as customizable prompts and better access to past entries.

This study provides preliminary evidence that AI can meaningfully support reflective practice and emotional growth. It lays the foundation for further exploration into the role of AI in personal journaling, emotional well-being, and human–AI interaction.

---

## Keywords

AI, journaling, reflection, emotional awareness, human–AI interaction

---

## References

1. Pennebaker, J. W., & Chung, C. K. (2011). *Expressive writing: Connections to physical and mental health*. In H. S. Friedman (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Health Psychology*. Oxford University Press.

2. Suler, J. (2016). The psychology of texting: A new digital landscape. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 19(7), 449–454.
3. Chung, C. K., Pennebaker, J. W., & Stone, L. D. (2008). Emotional language and self-disclosure in online journals. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 11(2), 217–223.
4. Gorichanaz, T. (2019). Toward a theory of information and experience. *Journal of Documentation*, 75(6), 1226–1242.
5. OpenAI. (2023). GPT models for text generation. Retrieved from <https://openai.com>